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A survey of a representative sample of 1,075 secondary school teachers has shown that teachers are confronted daily in their classrooms with a wide range of human relations problems and situations. Deciding how to discuss such a controversial subject as discrimination with minority groups or deciding whether or not to sing songs such as "Old Black Joe" or mention stories such as "Little Black Sambo" are problems which teachers encounter when working with different racial groups.

Ethnic origins also give rise to human relations problems. Examples are the difficulties arising in dealing objectively with German students who have Nazi leanings or with Mexican-Americans who are on the defensive and harbor feelings of inferiority. In teaching children of different religious faiths, such situations occur as singing Christmas carols with Jewish pupils present, teaching health education to Christian Scientists, and taking Catholic students on field trips to Protestant churches. Another serious problem results from varying socioeconomic classes. Many cases are cited of pupils from slum areas who are unable to pay for the hidden costs of schooling such as trips, sewing materials, lunch, club activities, and physical education clothing. Physical handicaps, emotional maladjustment, social immaturity, and non-English-speaking parents result in other human relations problems.

The answers received on the survey indicate that college courses tend to neglect the teaching of human relations information, values, and attitudes so that secondary school teachers are inadequately prepared to deal with situations that arise in the classroom. For this reason, inservice teacher education programs in human relations become an urgent necessity.

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PROGRAMS IN INTERGROUP RELATIONS
FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION

To:
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Research and Materials Branch

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HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

A challenge to teacher education

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Bennett O. Stalvey

A Study Conducted by
Subcommittee on Human Relations
in the Classroom

Teacher Education Committee of
Commission on Research
and Service

North Central Association of
Colleges and Secondary Schools

With Assistance From
Anti-Defamation League of
B'nai B'rith

Human Relations in the Classroom: A Challenge to Teacher Education

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RELATIONS
IN THE CLASSROOM
COMMITTEE ON TEACHER EDUCATION
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TEACHER EDUCATION FOR HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM
A report of 1108 college professors

HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM
A study of problems and situations reported by 1075 second year secondary school teachers

HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM
A challenge to teacher education

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Human Relations in the Classroom: A Challenge to Teacher Education[1]

The problems of civil rights and human relationships which the nation and the world are confronting so dramatically today will not be solved alone by political and legal action. The establishment of new, independent African nations, the promotion of international discussion through improved organizational channels, legislation for civil rights, supreme court decisions—these are not enough. It is the responsibility of Education to promote the understandings of the dynamics of human interaction, to develop individual skill in relating to others, and to foster attitudes and values supporting human dignity and individuality.

The North Central Association's Committee on Human Relations in the Classroom has presented evidence that this educational responsibility is not being discharged effectively. It has been shown through a survey of a representative sample of 1075 secondary school teachers in North Central schools[2] that teachers are confronted daily in their classrooms with a great range of human relations problems and situations. The educational opportunities inherent in these situations are not being capitalized upon; indeed the situations are often handled in ways which develop negative human relations, values and attitudes.

Analysis of what 1108 college professors who were members of the faculties of 336 teacher education institutions in the North Central area are doing to provide teachers in training with the skills they need to deal effectively with the human relations component of teaching[3] shows that such efforts are sporadic, unfocused and, for the most part, quite ineffective.

The Committee on Human Relations in the Classroom is now hoping to organize and support activities, in teacher education institutions and in school systems where it is evident that the continuing education of teachers-in-service goes on, which will draw from these findings implications for the improvement of human relations education. Toward this end there is presented in this report some of the "raw material" documents which reveal in vivid and dramatic form the need for vigorous and creative action by teacher educators.

Added to the anecdotal materials and illustrations drawn from answers to open-ended questions on the survey forms used in the two studies cited above, are some provocative questions which the Committee received in 1963 from a group of 150 secondary school teachers-in-training. These young people were not unaware of the challenges they might face and were searching the courses in which they were then enrolled for help in dealing with problems they anticipated.

Among their questions were the following:

> How do we become aware of our own unconscious prejudices and attitudes?
>
> How do you recognize "subtle prejudice," such as a prejudice against a student who refuses to learn?
>
> How can I teach a dirty child when I can't stand to be near him?
>
> At what age are student attitudes set? Can secondary teachers do much to change them? If so, what can they do?

[1] The Committee is indebted to Miss Gertrude Noar of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and Dr. C. DeLisle Crawford of Wayne State University.

[2] "Human Relations in the Classroom," NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY, Winter, 1963.

[3] "Teacher Education for Human Relations in the Classroom," NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY, Winter, 1962.

In contrast to these questions from prospective teachers, the in-service teachers' sensitivity (or lack of it) to the whole area of human relations problems and situations was reflected in their written statements on the survey instrument. For example, they wrote:

> Anyone who has trouble here has no business teaching.
>
> I have no problems. All members of the school are white, and religion is not discussed.
>
> It's been my happy experience not to be faced with situations which require that I notice these things, so I don't.
>
> We are very content here and have no such problems. I always try to make all students feel equal.
>
> I help the pupils get the right stories and suggest good reading and let them discover they too may succeed.
>
> I accept all these differences as either individual choices or, in the case of race, as something that is not the fault or plan of the person.
>
> I have adjusted to differences so automatically I have not been aware of it.
>
> In handling a student who felt discriminated against, his teacher told him, "I agree—and suggest that your actions were a reflection on yourself." He added, "I believe I was successful—for the moment only."

Succeeding sections of this report describe in greater detail the environmental and basically human causes and the kinds of problems faced by teachers in such areas as race, ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic class, intellectual level, emotional maladjustment and social immaturity, teacher-parent relations and staff relationships. Some of the methods used by teachers in dealing with these problems are presented, usually without evaluation.

Race and Race Relations Cause Problems

Some individual pupils are extremely conditioned by the fact of their race. For example, non-white pupils often have innate inferiority feelings, negative self concepts and low aspiration levels. These psychological factors tend to block learning. There are some teachers who still believe in the racial myth of white superiority and therefore expect that their non-white pupils will perform at lower achievement levels. As a result, some non-white pupils have developed extremely negative attitudes toward teachers and school by the time they reach the secondary level. Moreover, some white teachers are so deeply prejudiced that they reject their non-white pupils. Where such attitudes and conditions exist, the teacher faces pupil problems and learning situations which he may or may not realize are caused by race.

Because the fact of racial differences is not yet widely regarded as a positive value, because racial prejudice is widespread, and because non-white people resent discrimination, rejection, exclusion and the school's failure to provide equality of educational opportunity, inter-racial situations are apt to be full of tension. It is clear that many secondary school classrooms are not free of situations caused by such tensions. Teacher-trainees included in the study anticipated these difficulties. They asked such questions as the following:

> How fully can you discuss controversial subjects, such as discrimination, with minority groups?

How can a Negro teacher exhibit liking for Negro students in a predominantly white school without its being mistaken as prejudice?

What are the criteria to use in deciding whether to keep or eliminate certain songs and stories, such as *Old Black Joe, Carry Me Back to Old Virginny, Little Black Sambo* and others?

Replies from teachers in-service to open-end questions in the original survey instrument throw some light upon the problems and situations they meet in desegregated secondary schools. Some respondents are successful in dealing with race relations. For example, one wrote, "Racial problems have been eliminated through discussion, debate and reason." Many teachers were "patient" with pupils who charged them with discrimination and prejudice, and in many cases pupils "apologized" when such teachers talked with them after class. Occasionally anecdotal material showed that the teacher had some insight into the relation between feelings of rejection and poor classroom work. These teachers seemed able to make their Negro pupils more secure and more realistic in their appraisal of self and situation.

On the other hand, some admitted not knowing how a child in question felt, and others seemed unable to deal with non-white children who were uncomfortable during class discussions of racial problems, or with white pupils who refused to discuss such matters because of the presence of one or two Negroes.

Other teachers seemed to be completely out of touch with the realities of American society. For example, when a student said that Negroes "do not stand an equal chance to get ahead," the teacher conducted a discussion with the class in which the "falsity of her statement" was made clear to the student. Then the teacher added to her account, "The student's attitude included much self-pity."

A background of educational deprivation is very likely then to cause some Negro students to perform less well in school than they might otherwise be capable of. The fact that teachers often expect non-white and other minority group students to perform at low levels, showed through when a teacher in describing a Negro girl said, "It is not often that a colored person succeeds so well intellectually, emotionally and socially." Teachers were frequently accused by non-white students of reprimanding, punishing and failing them because of their race.

There is clear evidence that some teachers burden Negro children with racial guilt feelings. For example, a Negro guard in a nearly all white school, who tended to be harsh with students, was "made to realize by the teacher that his actions were multiplied a hundredfold in the minds of white boys who had had little direct experience with Negroes."

Occasional situations were reported which arose when mixed groups were on trips. These were handled in various ways. When, in one instance, Negroes were refused service in a restaurant, all the students walked out. The teacher and the principal followed through with the Chamber of Commerce, and the proprietor apologized. There were reports that employers refused to hire non-white pupils in work experience programs, but that the teachers did nothing about it.

Intergroup flirting was reported as occurring occasionally. This was considered to be offensive and handled by discouraging both parties. Fist fights over name calling were reported. In one case the teacher said, "Naturally I could not take either side. I did give a lecture on equality of race, color or religion."

Some young teachers find themselves in totally new situations and, understandably, have some fears and anxiety. One, confronted with a pupil who returned after school with his friends to complain about his marks, said, "I had never seen a Negro before I started to teach." Another expressed his unhappiness when called upon to counsel Negroes. He said, "They live in a different world. I feel my advice is unrealistic."

As one reads the foregoing inquires of teacher-trainees and the comments of teachers-in-service, he must conclude that teachers have not been adequately prepared to grapple with race relations problems in school. In many instances in the Committee's surveys, teachers reported having had little or no contact with people of other races, either as college students or as teachers. The methods commonly used to deal with the problems were class discussion, formal lecture and practice teaching. Though these methods were considered to be of value, the example set by the instructor was given a high rating, and field observations and projects as well as conferences with the faculty, were thought to be more worthwhile than formal lectures. The significance of these approaches to human relations education will not be lost on directors of pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Ethnic Origins Give Rise to Human Relations Problems

Although only American Indians are indigenous to our land, most of the people whose families originated in other nations have lost their immigrant identification. In part, this has been the result of marriage across ethnic group lines. Moreover, the American born children of parents who come from other nations rightly regard themselves and their families as Americans. At the same time there are in most cities some families newly arrived in this country, whose children are easily identified by reason of language, accents, and culture patterns. These pupils and their parents present problems to the teachers and may create tension situations in classrooms. Anecdotes in the survey indicate that in the North Central States are pupils newly come from Italy, Lithuania, Germany, Poland, Scandinavia, Mexico, Latin America, Latvia, Hungary, Belgium, Ireland and Afghanistan.

Two other distinct and different ethnic groups live in American cities—the Puerto Ricans and the Mexicans. Most of the children of these families speak Spanish and/or retain some accents when speaking English. Many Puerto Rican and Mexican-American families are in the lower socio-economic class, the group we now call "culturally deprived." However, their culture patterns differ from each other as well as from those of middle class white people. Prejudice against Puerto Ricans and Mexicans is widespread and they suffer from discrimination in many aspects of life.

Though most of the teacher-trainees had limited experience with children of foreign born parents, they raised some significant questions:

> How can our values as teachers be reconciled with those of the various groups?
>
> How can we interest parents in their children's in-school behavior and school activities?
>
> How can a teacher implement class acceptance of a minority group child? How can he make a minority child feel comfortable with other students?
>
> How can you overcome the prejudices among students?

The members of the North Central Association Committee, therefore, say that secondary school classroom teachers in the cities of the region do encounter pupils who present problems because of their ethnic origins. Moreover, the ethnic differences of students do cause tense situations in the classroom. Teachers themselves are often prejudiced against people of ethnic groups different from their own. The question is how do they deal with these problems?

It seems quite clear that in schools in cities of over a million population the problem often is acute and the teachers report that situations arise frequently. Though most of the reports seem to indicate that the teachers are satisfied with the way in which they deal with these kinds of situations, whether or not they resolve tensions remains questionable.

Students who do not speak English and those who, although born here, retain accents because Spanish or Italian is spoken in the home give teachers concern. Teachers felt that these students seemed to be on the defensive and to harbor feelings of inferiority. Teachers also occasionally believed that they "hid" behind language difficulties in order to avoid facing up to their problems.

Teachers reacted in different ways to foreign born pupils and to those who displayed strong national feelings. Some gave extra help with English and with homework and encouraged students to participate in class. A teacher told a boy of Mexican descent who felt that his origin was a handicap that "anyone who is determined can make something of himself." Other teachers felt that ignoring ethnic differences was the way to reduce sensitivity about them. Occasionally a Mexican-American child misunderstood a teacher who wanted to help him and charged the teacher with "picking on him." As would be expected, Spanish speaking teachers reported having no difficulty with Mexican-American students. Some teachers felt that destroying ethnic pride was a way to handle this situation. For example, one "tried to show Polish-American students who were sensitive about their land of origin how false was their belief in a land they had never seen." Occasionally teachers ascribed learning difficulties and discipline problems to the ethnic origins of their students.

There was evidence that teachers were confused about how to handle moral issues and judgments when the nationality of a child was a factor. An example was given of a German boy who asked, "Why does everyone condemn Hitler?" One teacher said he "tried to answer such questions as objectively as possible." Another "tried to look at both sides." Strong allegiance to Germany on the part of students gave teachers concern, and Jewish teachers particularly had difficulty in dealing with German students who "had Nazi leanings."

Teachers helped foreign born students to attain status by giving them roles in dramatic productions, membership on athletic teams, opportunities to tell their classmates about the lands from which they came, and by emphasizing the contributions made by the great people who came from these nations. On the other hand, only a few teachers did something positive about student name calling and stereotyping.

Teachers described some elements in culture patterns that disturbed them, but seemed not to know what to do to change these or indeed whether to do anything. Among the illustrations given were those of a South American girl who was used to being waited on; an Italian father whose motto was, "If that kid don't leave you learn him his English, I'm gonna bash his head in"; and an Irish boy whose ways of speaking, dressing and walking were different from those of his fellow students.

Religion and Interfaith Relations Create Problems

Though much is being done to soften the antagonism created by religious differences, inter-religious prejudice is still widespread. Probably few other experiences cause more heartache in adolescents than social rejection based on religion. Many parents encourage their children to give up associations across religious group lines during the teenage period, although they may have raised little objection previously.

In recent years the controversy over separation of church and state has focused upon religious observances in education. Objections to Christmas celebrations in school, whether voiced by Christians who believe religion belongs in home and school, by non-Christians, by atheists or by Civil Libertarians, Supreme Court decisions striking down prayers and Bible reading in schools have been resented by some, applauded by others. In 1960 a wave of anti-Semitic desecrations swept across the country, and cities, small and large, in the North Central states had their share. In the 1960 presidential election campaign anti-Catholic prejudice and activity were in evidence.

Students preparing to become secondary school teachers wonder about these matters.

They asked:

> Isn't it worse to avoid a controversial topic than to include it in the fear of giving offense to the minority groups involved?
>
> Should we refrain from mention of Christmas (singing of Christmas carols, etc.) in a predominantly non-Christian neighborhood?
>
> What is wrong with instilling our values (not prejudices) in the minds of our students?
>
> Is it good to make an issue of apparent prejudice within a group?
>
> When a class is overtly hostile to one child, what can we do—transfer the child to another group or educate our group?

Questions such as these should indicate to professors of education that undergraduates, prior to teaching experience, do have questions which require discussion and study.

Do religious differences and interfaith antagonisms affect the classrooms? Anecdotes taken from the survey responses of experienced teachers indicate the nature of the problems and situations and the methods employed by teachers in dealing with them. For instance, remarks consciously or unconsciously made by teachers which reveal anti-Semitism or anti-Catholicism are deeply resented by both pupils and parents, who often are quite frustrated because they do not know what to do about the matter.

Many respondents appeared to be quite unaware of the inappropriateness of having religion injected into classroom discussions. (They are very religiously oriented.) They did not hesitate to use religious principles and sanctions in handling disciplinary infractions and interpersonal relations.

In situations which arose with and among students, the teachers were generally uncomfortable. Some were dissatsified because students could not be "objective." They were often confused with respect to how to teach *about* religions, the role of religions in history and the significance of religion in American life. For example, an English teacher assigned essays and "factual term papers," and some pupils wrote about one or another aspect of religion. The teacher commented to the class that they had dealt with these matters "illogically," whereupon the pupils accused her of being prejudiced. She herself believed that the pupils were not "able to think" and were quoting "Poll Parrot style things they did not understand."

In a science class a girl gave a report on "Science and Religion." "Conflict between her beliefs and her answers," according to the teacher, "made her a little uncertain in regard to her faith."

Some situations stemmed from the teacher's questionable selection of material. For example, an English teacher showed the film "Come to the Stable." Some students objected to it, while others felt called upon to defend the film and Catholicism. After bitter remarks had been exchanged, the teacher "turned it into a discussion of our historic religious freedom."

Some respondents, in fear of being charged with partiality, said they were more severe in criticizing students who belonged to the same faith as their own. Others reported their hesitancy and discomfort when discussing current affairs that involved religious minorities because members of those groups were in the class, as for example, Arab-Israeli relations. Teachers did not know how to reply when asked for their own opinions.

A number of reports dealt with situations created by members of Jehovah's Witness and Adventists who, because of religious customs, refused to salute the flag, or to participate in dancing and other social activities, or to attend functions on Friday or Saturday nights. These differences were not understood by other students, and teachers did

not know how to ease the resulting tensions. One teacher called the dance steps "exercises." In some instances notes excusing students from certain activities were required from ministers, and in others, sports were substituted for the dances.

Feelings and actions of exclusion, rejection and inferiority on the part of students were reported by teachers in schools in which the population was predominantly of one or another religious group. Sometimes those in the minority accused the faculty and students of discriminating against them. However, though teachers observed and reported prejudice and rejection, they did nothing to change negative attitudes and behaviors. Reports came from biology teachers that difficulties occurred over the teaching of evolution. Physics also presented problems to some religiously oriented pupils. So, too, did home economics when the lesson included a food, such as bacon, which was rejected by some pupils for religious reasons. English teachers said they faced situations when using Twain's *Diary of Adam and Eve*, *The Good Earth* and Bible selections. The assignment of other readings was the usual way out.

Problems confronted music teachers when students of a particular faith refused to sing religious music other than their own. Problems involved the singing of Christmas carols, the unwillingness of Jewish students to accept roles in Christmas plays and of Catholics to go on trips to Protestant churches. Guest sings were handled mostly by the teacher's "being sensitive to the rights of all concerned" and by asking pupils "to make an effort to show respect and understanding and not be narrow-minded."

In a health education class problems were presented by Christian Scientists, by a student who referred to health as a "miracle of God" and by Catholics who wanted a priest in for prayers before games.

The Committee's studies showed that in the opinions of one-fourth of the second-year teacher respondents their college curriculum had no relevance to problems arising from religious differences. There was a slight relationship for about one-third, and less than one-tenth reported it very helpful. It would seem that the situation requires a remedy.

Socio-Economic Class Gives Rise to Problems

One of the most serious problems confronting the American public schools is what to do about children who live in slums. All big cities have these depressed areas, which in large measure are inhabited by non-whites and people of other minority groups. Because the adults have had little schooling and tend to be discriminated against, they are frequently unemployed. Poverty and the conditions imposed upon them by society combine to deprive the children of those cultural experiences which prepare middle class children for schooling. Such children are predoomed to failure in the middle class school, where teachers are not prepared to deal with the problems they present. By the time these children reach the secondary level, many are apathetic, withdrawn, alienated, convinced they cannot learn, hostile to school and teacher. They are the potential dropouts whom many teachers do not hesitate to push out.

Prospective high school teachers evidence much concern which they indicated in the following questions:

> How does a middle class teacher cope with the upper class child who feels himself superior?
>
> How do you inspire students in lower socio-economic levels to improve themselves and thus better their position in society?
>
> Is it possible for a teacher to submerge his own class background when teaching (practically speaking)?
>
> What specific facts about children with low socio-economic backgrounds would help us to understand our students?

These are the questions of inexperienced, untried, young people.

We turn to the reactions of second-year high school teachers which reveal the problems they meet and the amount or lack of wisdom, insight and skill they used in dealing with them. These teacher respondents frequently assumed that poor school work was the result of poverty. Some seemed also to equate lack of personal cleanliness with poverty, and they were apt to ascribe children's "uninhibited reactions" to the low economics of the neighborhood. Sometimes pupils' resentments were credited to differences between their own and the teachers' incomes. Some teachers showed scornful attitudes toward poor children. One remarked, "Pupils think the Lord should share with them." Some teachers had difficulty with wealthy students, whose problems were ascribed to cars or to parental indifference. These students were reported as creating classroom situations through snobbishness, formation of cliques, and negative attitudes toward teachers. Teachers, in turn, expressed hostility toward them.

A large majority of the statements about socio-economic problems dealt with pupils' inability to pay for things they needed. The following partial list of what pupils cannot pay for (and suffer thereby) is an indication of the hidden costs of free public education as well as the root of many human relations problems: shop projects; sewing materials; special paper; text and workbooks; physical education clothing, towels and lockers; special uniforms and dresses for special occasions; trips; fines; club activities; medical examinations; correction of physical defects; banquets; magazine subscriptions; laboratory fees; band instruments; lunch; filmstrips; bus fares. Lack of money for suitable clothing and haircuts was also noted.

Teachers employed various methods in dealing with an individual pupil's inability to pay for something he needed. Some of these were taking up a class collection; lending him money; "donating" or offering the money; securing a job in or out of school for the pupil; and referring the case to counselor, principal or welfare agency. In too many cases it seemed that expressions of sympathy or understanding were substituted for carefully considered and considerate action.

The teachers described classroom situations caused by differences in economic level. Among these were: ridicule of pupils who were richer, or poorer, or badly dressed or unclean; resentment over name calling and teasing; sensitivity regarding class discussion of economics, slums and welfare; formation of cliques on basis of economic level; display of animosity toward outgroup child who tried to get in; gossip; feelings of rejection, real or imaginary; excessive absence; conflict over "standards" of the teacher (for example, a teacher seemed to question a child who preferred "quantity of food to attractive service"); and feelings of inadequacy due to disparity in clothing. Some teachers said they lacked an understanding because they had no previous experience with lower class pupils; other teachers tended to favor pupils from the higher economic levels ("easier to work with generally").

Differences in Intellectual Levels Cause Problems

Race, religion, ethnic origins, and socio-economic class are factors that affect relationships among groups in American society. They are also highly productive of national, community and interpersonal tensions. However, differences in intellectual ability and the way in which the school elects to teach children on all performance levels have become increasingly serious in producing tension in and out of school. In spite of the fact that really homogeneous grouping of pupils is impossible, more and more school systems have adopted ability grouping and track systems in attempts to help teachers to teach and children to learn. Whether or not these plans produce favorable results or create additional anxieties and learning problems for individual pupils and their parents is controversial. It is becoming clear, however, that the aspiration level of an individual is affected by his so-called ability placement and also that the way the teacher perceives the abilities of children in his group affects what he expects them to achieve and determines in large measure what and how he teaches them.

It is, of course, extremely unlikely that situations arising out of ability and achievement differences could be avoided in classrooms in which competition is used to motivate learning and marks are the rewards for success. Such a setting is sure to give rise to charges of partiality, injustice, and lack of equal opportunity on the part of teachers.

How to deal with ability differences puzzled the group of 150 high school teacher trainees. They asked:

> How can we help each young person to work up to his maximum capacity?
>
> Is it really possible to have regard for intellectual differences when you must teach 150 different students each day?
>
> How can classroom materials be obtained which are suited to the varying interests and abilities of boys and girls in high school classes?
>
> How does one encourage a "bright" student from a poor home to do his best in a class of disinterested average students?
>
> How do we eliminate prejudice, which is an emotional force, with intellectual means?
>
> How do we separate "ability" and "attitude" in ourselves and in our students?

Anecdotes about intellectual differences written by the responding high school teachers showed confusion with respect to the meaning of such words as intellect, potentiality, intelligence, mental ability, and I.Q. Moreover, teachers complained about class size no matter what it was—fifteen, thirty or forty-five. They also complained about the range of their pupils' intellectual levels whether or not pupils were grouped according to ability. They experienced difficulty in grading their pupils. Though an occasional teacher showed some insight into the relationship between success and self-concept in the learning behavior of an individual, most seemed never to doubt the validity of their own judgments or of the recorded I.Q. scores. The kinds of problems listed by the teachers as being caused by differences in intellectual levels of high school students included:

> Resentment by some pupils of the over-activity of bright pupils and boredom on the part of pupils who did not understand.
>
> Personal frustration over "the leveling process" and inability to maintain group work.
>
> Ridicule of low ability groups and pupils' resentments over placement in them and of individual slow learners.

Teachers reported that they handled intellectual differences in the following ways:

> Simply presented the material, hoped for the best, and failed those who could not "grasp" it.
>
> Used individual work books; varied the questions and assignments.
>
> Divided the class into sub-groups; kept the brighter students "busier" and gave them extra projects.
>
> Tended to "teach to" or spend most of the time with the slower, or the average, or the bright ones.
>
> Explained away complaints and resentments.
>
> Used brighter students as aides and leaders.
>
> Set high standards, instilled confidence, and eliminated slower students from the course.

Avoided belittling and humiliating those who needed help, and praised progress.

"Scratched the surface" with low ability groups, or "watered down" the course of study.

They reported few if any efforts to teach the essential worth and dignity of the human being, regardless of his apparent mental level. Also, the teachers made no attempt to discuss the nation's need for people able and willing to work at the less skilled occupational levels.

Of the 1075 secondary teachers in the Committee's first study about one-third felt that the college curriculum was very helpful to them in understanding different intellectual levels; one-fourth said it was helpful. In no other human relations area was the college curriculum reported to be as helpful.

It is evident, nevertheless, that much more attention needs to be given to the relationship between the practical problems which have been described and the theoretical considerations involved in dealing with them. If college professors visited high school classrooms, they would become more aware of the range of intellectual problems teachers face.

Physical Handicaps Occasionally Create Problem Situations

Another kind of difference between students relates to their physical rather than their mental capabilities. In the large cities, pupils with severe physical handicaps are usually placed in special schools under carefully trained teachers. Institutions for deaf and blind children are available in almost every state. Where special schools have not been provided, special classes are frequently organized for these pupils. Consequently well over one-third of the teachers in this study reported never having to deal with a problem arising out of students' physical handicaps. Of those who had such experiences, few had to face them with any regularity.

The secondary school teacher-trainees raised a few questions about pupils with such handicaps:

How can we learn about physically handicapped students in regular high schools?

How can we identify those who have cardiac difficulties and be alerted to recognize early those having vision, hearing, and speech defects?

Once recognized, if they are not referred to a special school, it is important that teachers know how to deal with them. In the judgment of the Committee insufficient attention is paid to such handicaps in teacher training. Is it assumed that somehow the novitiate will know what to do? In addition to obvious physical handicaps there are cases of epilepsy, faulty metabolism, hyper- or hypo-tension, neuroses, and increasing numbers of ulcers even in young children. Suicide is not unknown. Yet in most teacher-education programs physiological psychology is given little attention. Since physiological functioning is basic to intellectual development, it would appear that added attention should be given to this aspect of human development in the education of teachers.

Emotional Maladjustment and Social Immaturity Cause Problems

One of the most serious problems confronting our society is mental illness. We are told that at least one in ten people will suffer from some degree of mental illness during his life. The number of illnesses attributed to emotional causes is constantly increasing. Across the nation teachers are concerned about their neurotic and psychotic pupils and plead for the appointment of doctors and psychiatric social workers. The incidence of these emotional maladjustments increases in early adolescence and is not peculiar to any one group or social class.

There is increasing clinical evidence that unsatisfactory human relations are the cause of many of these illnesses. The school has not been absolved of responsibility; in fact, it has been called a contributing factor. Undergraduate students ask:

> How can the teacher deal with mental problems of students in the classroom?
>
> Is one child who has a serious problem more important than the group, and what do you do about the child?
>
> How would you suggest interesting the quiet and uninterested child to take an active part in the group?

Among the high school teachers-in-service there was a tendency to equate mental disturbance and maladjustment with immaturity. Moreover, cases which seemed like ordinary aggression based on dislike of one pupil for another, were often interpreted as resulting from "lack of emotional maturity." A teacher's inability to control talking, noise and inattention was ascribed to the pupil's lack of social maturity. There seemed to be little understanding of what to expect and accept as characteristic of the normal emotional maturity level of adolescent boys and girls. Differences in physical maturity caused some problems and situations, which some teachers interpreted as evidences of social immaturity. The following anecdotes illustrate the problems and situations reported by teachers and gives a sample of the ways in which they attempted to meet them.

> "I have a girl who is emotionally upset. She talks a lot about her troubles—boy friends, losing weight, relations with parents. I found I can joke about her troubles, making her feel better."
>
> "One little boy couldn't sit still. I found that the best thing to do was to remind him to stay in his seat."
>
> "One girl had a tamper tantrum. The next day I explained behavior patterns and mentioned that the tantrum is an immature way to react. . . . Now she is as sweet as pie."
>
> "Some high school students are show-offs. I knew one instance when I had to resort to public shaming and threat of expulsion. . . . I worry if I fail."

These anecdotes reveal that some high school teachers are aware of the emotional problems of their students. The effectiveness of what they do is another matter.

Situations caused by differences in sex and in social maturity were not always clearly defined. They were, for the most part, connected with physiological maturity, boy-girl differences in maturity, dress, lack of experience on the part of students in planning and participating in social activities, and hesitation of undeveloped girls to undress in the gym locker room. Teachers also mentioned the difficulty of presenting some kinds of subject matter to mixed classes; problems caused by the boys' inability to dance; and differences in the social maturity of boys and girls as well as among the girls themselves.

Occasionally situations were caused by rivalries, name calling, and teasing. The presence of a married student caused one teacher to "eavesdrop" on conversations so that she could be sure other pupils would not be "influenced in the wrong direction." Some teachers were able to have open, "mature," and frank classroom discussions. Others avoided "deep involvement." A few were not sure about whether to laugh, or ignore, or to show displeasure about remarks made by pupils. Rather than ask pupils to answer questions when teaching human biology, one teacher "gave a formal lecture."

Teachers' answers often reflected their own attitudes. For example, in discussing a situation in which a boy refused a dramatic role because it required liking a girl, the teacher said, "Personally, I would almost rather have a seventh grade boy be like this,

but it does present something of a problem." Another who objected to holding hands said, "I told them to do their courting after school." Another comment was: "The stupid boys are always embarrassed when they have to act with or perform in front of the intelligent girls." One teacher felt it incumbent upon him, when pupils found a double meaning in his remarks, "to bring about feelings of self shame by degrading the pupils who had that sense of humor," a procedure which he said was "very effective."

While the findings of these studies show that teachers are aware of social and emotional problems, including those arising from boy-girl relationships, they also disclose a lack of sophistication in dealing with them. "Joking about troubles," "reminding pupils to sit still," "eavesdropping on conversations," bringing about "feelings of self-shame," and the use of "public shaming" and "threat of expulsion" are superficial, ineffective ways of dealing with problems. If teachers are unable to deal directly with boy-girl relationships, then administrators need to include relevant materials in their faculty study program.

Teacher-Parent Relationships Present Problems

Human relations problems in the schools can be solved only when there is full understanding and cooperation between home and school. Even in the best of situations full cooperation is not easily achieved but unless there is at least some understanding, home and school may work at cross-purposes. Questions often raised by teachers are:

> How can teachers be expected to deal with students who come from lower socio-economic classes when they do not have time to become acquainted with the parents?
>
> How can teachers cope with the misbehavior of children whose parents do not seem to care?

Secondary school teachers have fewer contacts with parents than do elementary teachers. In fact, many of them complain about the difficulty of getting parents to come to the school for conferences. Although many parents do take advantage of invitations to concerts, plays, physical education meets and sports events, and even open-house nights, these big affairs afford little opportunity for face-to-face meetings with individual teachers. In very few secondary schools were teachers encouraged to make home visits.

The Committee's expectation that young teachers would not report many difficulties with parents arising from most of the areas explored was fulfilled. Differences in the economic level of parents rarely caused any problems to the large majority of teachers, although parents of high economic status occasionally "belittled" or attempted to intimidate the teacher. Differing national origins caused few difficulties between parents and teachers. Religious differences also seemed to present few reasons for friction, although in some instances the teacher attributed a parent's negative attitude to his religion. One teacher reported that a parent objected to him because of his religion, and that he therefore dropped the child from the activity he was supervising.

Some teachers reported having difficulty in communicating with parents who did not speak English. Others said that the religious convictions of some parents interfered with their children's school activities. Still others mentioned values, and cultural patterns. For example, one said that Indian parents did not "realize the necessity of regular attendance and promptness."

It is somewhat surprising to find that relatively few teachers ever had a problem because of being of a different race than the parents. On the other hand, it is clear that non-white parents do not often go to the school of their own volition, and teachers complain about not being able to talk with them.

Reaction to the task of dealing with parents was varied. Some teachers reported that all relationships were good, or that dealing with parents was the responsibility of ad-

ministrators. A number referred to the anxieties of parents over the marks, successes, failures, and aspirations of their children. Some of these had to do with the parents' resentment over real or imagined teacher attitudes toward their children, others with differences between parent and teacher values and judgments. Parents and teachers often disagreed in their philosophy of child rearing, in their methods of punishment, in their attitudes toward authority, in their ideas as to the "proper" courses a particular child should take, in the value they placed upon education in general, in their feeling of the importance of a college education, and in their estimates of a child's ability.

There were other anecdotes about "irate parents" who said the school was poor, or who accused teachers of "not doing their part." Parents were described by one teacher as "aggressive and antagonistic." She said they came to her home to "read her off." Most such instances were about grades. In many cases when teachers "explained," tensions were eased. However, some teachers reported that parents accused them of showing prejudice and discrimination in giving grades and in selecting teams. Others said that parents were pleased when told that their children had ability. Most teachers realized that they needed records to back up marks. Some teachers ascribed their own lack of understanding of parents to their lack of experience with adults different from themselves.

It seems amply clear that at the college level, in practice teaching situations and in internships, as well as during the probationary years of service, secondary teachers need both theoretical training and clinical experience in dealing with parents because human relations problems are involved.

Relations with Experienced Teachers and With Administrators Cause Tensions

Staff relationships reach the tension stage for young teachers over trivial as well as serious matters. For example, in the survey teachers reported trouble with colleagues over gossip and the care and cleanliness of classrooms they shared. Some older teachers were said to ignore young teachers, while others treated them "nice but not friendly." Occasionally a difference in educational philosophy caused coolness between teachers. The circumstances involved grading, course selection, disqualifying students for extra-curricular activities, usurping time, and handling discipline. Tensions were created by teachers who blamed their colleagues for students' failures. Jealousies flared up at times over pupils, or schedules, or assignment of duties. The hierarchy of subject areas seemed to confer status on the teachers which others resented.

Misunderstandings with principals were reported in the survey. Very often the cause was lack of communication. When the teacher was given a chance to talk to the principal, tensions were relieved or resolved. More serious situations arose when principals failed to support the teacher, called him down in front of his class, listened only to the student's side of the story, or conferred with a complaining parent without calling in the teacher. Some conflicts were caused by lack of clarity over where the authority lay in a particular situation, others by teachers who refused to abide by no-smoking rules. Discussions of and feelings about the quality of a teacher's service were tension-producing. The respondents appreciated administrators who were patient and "let them explain."

In one school a custodian presented problems because he felt himself to be "the boss." In other schools custodians were reported to be most cooperative when the young teachers treated them with respect.

Changes are Called for in Teacher Education

The studies on Human Relations in the Classroom were concerned both with teacher preparation and the experiences of high school teachers. Of the 429 responses to the

question, "What do you wish you had known about human relations before you became a teacher?" the following were the most frequent:

How to handle deviant children

Understanding of individual differences—intellectual, emotional, socio-economic, religious, racial, ethnic

Understanding of problems faced by the adolescent

Understanding of the negative aspects of the teaching profession—politics, apathy, narrowmindedness

How to deal with parents

Better knowledge of the behavioral sciences

How to teach for individual differences

How to deal with administrators and co-workers

Many wished they had had broader practical experience in human relations situations.

Summary

Even though colleges give considerable attention to the less controversial aspects of human relations, more effective preparation needs to be provided in conveying information and understanding about relationships between age groups, between the sexes, and students of varying intelligence levels. There is even greater need for adequate preparation to deal with the controversial situations of race, religion, social class, and nationality. Although the Committee's studies show that professors in education, social science, psychology, sociology, and anthropology provide most of the human relations education, it is quite apparent that teachers are not being adequately prepared to deal with children as persons, to work with parents of all kinds, and to understand community conditions which affect children's development. Although all kinds of methods are used to teach human relations, the direct learning experiences, which are most effective in changing attitudes, in developing sensitivity and in establishing values and skills, were used by only a small percentage of professors.

The Committee's studies are convincing evidence that the neglect of human relations information, values, attitudes and skills in college courses results in sending into the schools secondary teachers who do not understand many of their pupils and who do not know how to deal with the situations that arise in their classrooms. In-service education programs in human relations therefore become a must.

To the statement that the primary responsibility of the school is to teach academic subject matter, the Committee's answer is that such teaching can not be done even passably well unless the human equation is taken into account. The finest teaching in the world will not "take" if in the classroom communication breaks down and relationships are spoiled by fear of the teacher or of classmates, by feelings of inferiority, by sullenness, indifference, and hostility.

Does not the increase in school drop-outs, juvenile delinquency, divorce and crime, mandate attention to human relations problems? When only one-seventh of the world's peoples are Jews or Christians, when one-third of our own nation is economically deprived, and when three-fourths of the world's population is non-white, can we any longer dare to postpone teaching teachers and pupils the way of good, positive human relations in the democratic society?